Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENNA 02320 151448Z

43
ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 ACDE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 H-03 NSC-07

SS-20 IO-14 AEC-11 AECE-00 OMB-01 SAM-01 OIC-04 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2009
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T VIENNA 2320

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN
REPS MARCH 14, 1974

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THREE AND ONE-HALF HOUR INFORMAL SESSION MARCH 14, ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY BELGIAN REP, UK REP AND US REP, AND EAST BY SOVIET REPS KHESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY, POLISH REP STRULAK, AND CZECH REP KLEIN. DISCUSSION AGAIN FOCUSED ON EASTERN DESIRES TO INCLUDE AIR FORCES AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN REDUCTIONS; EAST EMPHASIZED NUCLEAR OVER AIR. FOR THE MOST PART, DISCUSSION CONSISTED OF REPETITION OF KNOWN ELEMENTS, WITH NEITHER SIDE
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 02320 151448Z

BUDGING FROM ITS POSITION, ALTHOUGH SOME INTERESTING

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

DETAILS EMERGED. EASTERN REPS WERE BETTER PREPARED ON
THIS OCCASION THAN ON PREVIOUS ONE, BUT AT END ALLIED
REPS APPEARED TO HAVE SLIGHT EDGE AS REGARDS OVERALL
COURSE OF SESSION.

2. MAIN EASTERN ARGUMENTS WERE THAT, IF ANY REDUCTIONS
WERE TO BE CARRIED OUT, THEN IT WAS MANIFESTLY LOGICAL TO
INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF ALL FORCES LOCATED WITHIN
THE AREA. SECOND, EAST WAS WILLING TO TAKE
INTO ACCOUNT ALLIED INTERESTS THE GROUND
FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED. IF THERE WERE TO
BE A NEGOTIATED OUTCOME, WEST FOR ITS PART
WOULD HAVE TO TAKE EASTERN INTERESTS INTO
ACCOUNT. ALLIED REPS AGAIN FOCUSED THEIR
ARGUMENTATION ON THE NEED TO REDUCE THE MOST UNSTABLE
ELEMENT WITHIN THE AREA. EASTERN REPS ARGUED THAT
CONFLICT IN CENTRAL EUROPE COULD BREAK OUT THROUGH
US OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, EITHER BY MISCALCULATION OR
BY SURPRISE ATTACK, AND THAT STRENGTHENING STABILITY
IN THE AREA THEREFORE REQUIRED REDUCTION OF THESE
WEAPONS ALSO. IN THIS CONNECTION, THEY MADE MUCH OF
ALERT STATUS OF WESTERN TACTICAL NUCLEAR FORCES. THEY
CLAIMED ALLIES HAD CHANGED THEIR POSITION ON INCLUSION
OF AIR AND NUCLEARS SINCE THE PREPARATORY TALKS. EASTERN
REPS EXTENDED THEIR SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL TO
INCLUDE SMALL SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS OF AIR AND NUCLEAR
FORCES. THEY APPARENTLY WISHED TO USE THESE REDUCTIONS
AS JUSTIFICATION FOR FREEZE OF THESE WEAPONS. EASTERN
REPS ARGUED THAT OVERALL PARITY IN TH REDUCTION AREA
WAS A POSITIVE GOAL, BUT RESISTED QUESTIONS AS TO WHETHER
PARITY SHOULD APPLY TO INDIVIDUAL FORCE COMPONENTS.

3. TOWARDS OUTSET OF SESSION, KHLESTOV MADE SLIP
IN APPEARING TO PROPOSE THAT THE REDUCTIONS AREA BE
TURNED INTO A WHOLLY DEMILITARIZED ZONE. AFTER UK REP
CALLED HIM ON THIS, HE WAS RESCUED BY SMIRNOVSKY'S
INTERVENTION. INCIDENT ONCE AGAIN ILLUSTRATED KHLESTOV'S
OWN UNFAMILIARITY WITH THE DETAILS OF THE SUBJECT MATTER.
TOWARDS THE END OF THE SESSION, ALLIED REPS ELICITED
POINT FROM EAST THAT, UNDER EASTERN REDUCTION PROPOSALS,
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REDUCTION OF MEN OR EQUIPMENT WOULD BE COMPUTED ON THE
BASIS OF STARTING TOTALS WHICH WOULD NOT BE AGREED
BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. SIMILARLY, NEW LEVELS AFTER
REDUCTIONS WOULD ALSO NOT BE AGEED. INSTEAD, EACH
SIDE WOULD AGREE TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES BY A CERTIAN
PERCENTAGE AND INFORM OTHER SIDE WHAT THIS WOULD AMOUNT
TO IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC NUMBER OF MEN OR EQUIPMENT.
ALLIED REPS EXPRESSED STRONG SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE

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VALUE OF REDUCTIONS CARRED OUT ON SUCH A BASIS.

4. NEXT MEETING WAS SET FOR MARCH 18. END SUMMARY.

REMAINDER OF INFORMAL SESSION REPORT FOLLOWS SEPTEL.
HUMES

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